Visit of Pakistani business Delegation

723. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN:
SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pakistani businessmen visited India in June-July, 2003 and two-day meeting between India and Pakistani businessmen was inaugurated by the External Affairs Minister;

(b) whether India and Pakistan have decided to open up trade channels;

(c) whether India and Pakistan have entered into tea accord and Pakistan has decided to import 10-15 million kg. of tea from India;

(d) if so, whether Pakistani traders urged the Prime Minister to relax visa norms for businessmen and submitted joint memorandum for normalization of trade relations; and

(e) if so, to what extent this would help improving trade relations between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir. External Affairs Minister had delivered the inaugural address at the Conference on July 7, 2003 during the Third Meeting of India-Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IPCCI) held in New Delhi on July 7-8, 2003.

(b) Trade between India and Pakistan has been going on.

(c) An Indian business delegation from the tea trade and industry had visited Karachi, Pakistan, in June, 2003 and held discussions with Pakistan Tea Association (PTA). According to Press reports in Pakistan, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on import of tea from India by PTA.

(d) The Pakistan delegation for the Third IPCCI Meeting had met the Prime Minister on July 8, 2003 and presented him the joint

recommendations made in the IPCCI meeting for promoting trade including liberal issue of visas to businessmen.

(e) The interaction will help to promote trade and economic co-operation between India and Pakistan which cannot be quantified.

Concessions to EOUs

724. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have plans to extend hundred per cent concessions to the Export Oriented Units (EOUs), which are available to the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) at present;

(b) if so, the details in this regard and since when; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to get exemptions from the various States for State level taxes in favour of thes EOUs/SEZs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The Scheme of Export Oriented Units (EOUs) and Special Economic Zones (SEZs) are two separate schemes of the Government to promote exports. The concessions provided under the two schemes are different.

(c) State Governments were requested to exempt EOUs and units of SEZs from levy of State level taxes. Most of the State Governments have already exempted EOU/SEZ units from the levy of State level taxes.

Lifting of ban on Indian items by Pakistan

725. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA:
DR. AKHILESH DAS:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether as a confidence building measure, Pakistan lately cleared atleast 73 items that it had banned for imports from India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;